



# WARRIOR SPECIAL



2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team  
25th Infantry Division

## Warriors Serve

B-52 Soldiers give back to the  
local community... Pg. 12

## True Blue

12 Warriors earn their True Blue  
Expert Infantryman's Badge... Pg. 14



## Command Team's Foreword

Warriors! These past few months have been busy and fast-moving and we cannot tell you enough how proud of you we are for the outstanding effort and performance individuals in our formation have put forth. We recognize one outstanding Warrior from every battalion each week but we know there are many more out there just like them who continue to excel, develop those around them, and make 2nd Brigade the best Stryker Brigade Combat Team in the Army.



Following a week-long division CPX, Warrior Brigade took a break from the high op-tempo in June. Block leave proved to be a relaxing and refreshing time for our unit as we returned with vigor and enthusiasm to take on the 4th quarter at a sprint. We celebrated the brigade's 96th birthday in August with the Week of the Warrior.

While the brigade and battalion staffs simultaneously planned, integrated and synchronized with the rest of the 25th Infantry Division in preparation for Ulchi Freedom Guardian, also in August, we were preparing our "On Time" Artillery Battalion to get out the door to Pohakulua Training Area on the Big Island of Hawaii. For the second time this year, "On Time" set yet another record in the history of 25th Infantry Division with the first Combined Arms Live Fire Exercise which they executed three times successfully.

We had an opportunity to honor a former member of the Gimlet Battalion, Mr. Robert Cox, who served as a sergeant during the Vietnam War. The Gimlets prepared a remarkable ceremony and hosted Hawaii Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard as she presented Mr. Cox with a Purple Heart and a Bronze Star Medal with "V" device. Just two weeks later, we held another ceremony at the Warrior Memorial to honor our fallen Warriors following a 9/11 memorial brigade run.

Soldiers from around the brigade continued to excel as we had several inductees into the Sergeant Audie Murphy Club, graduates of Air Assault School, and outstanding achievers who earned the Expert Infantryman's Badge in September.

Members of the brigade staff and representatives from some of the battalions traveled to Malaysia as part of U.S. Army Pacific's 2013 Keris Strike Exercise, an annual theater security cooperation exercise conducted with the Malaysian Armed Forces. This year marks the 17th time our two countries have partnered for this exercise. Soldiers from 2SBCT had an opportunity to train at the Malaysian Jungle Warfare Wing Training Center, provided counter IED training and medical first responder training to Malaysian Soldiers, and experienced the Malaysian culture. The culminating event was a peace enforcement operation and humanitarian assistance/disaster relief exercise aimed at working together with the Malaysian Armed Forces to restore peace and basic services while assisting a host nation government during a catastrophe in the region.

Keris Strike 2013 and 2-14 CAV's upcoming Southern Katipo exercise are extremely critical to our position as the Army's western-most Stryker Brigade and we will continue to be ambassadors of our military and our nation as we do our part to build partner capacity in the Pacific region.

MICHAEL A. CROSBY  
CSM, USA  
Brigade Command Sergeant Major

THOMAS H. MACKEY  
Colonel, Infantry  
Commanding



# Chaplain's Corner



Seasons come and seasons go, but in Hawaii you hardly know. We don't get to watch the leaves turn color and snow fall. For some of us, we really miss it. For others, no snow is a good thing. There's another season coming that brings great anticipation—the holiday season of Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Christmas, and New Years.

Many of us have fond memories of the holiday season. If you reflect on what Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Christmas, and New Years represent, you find they share the ideas of gratitude, hope, healing, reconciliation, joy and a new start. These notions and concepts are positive and healthy for our lives. Depending on how you were raised and what you have chosen to believe about God, you may realize that the holiday season is a rich and vibrant season of peace and love. Commercialism has taken over much of the holidays, but that doesn't mean we have to let the true meaning get lost in the translation.

Take advantage of the holidays. Participate in your faith tradition and beliefs. Bring hope, love, and joy into your home and family. Stay in touch with your family wherever

they might live. If you're newly married start some new traditions as a couple before you have children. If you're already parents, start traditions that will be meaningful to your kids. For me and my family and whoever are my guests on Thanksgiving, we go around the table and share our reasons for being thankful. My wife grew up in a family of seven children that to this day, sing Christmas songs and holiday carols before opening presents, go to church to celebrate Christmas, and share a huge meal together.

We all have reasons for not being so cheerful during the holidays. But don't focus on the negative and the things that are holding you down. Chose instead to focus on what brings hope, healing, joy and love. If you haven't gone to the house of worship that you identify yourself with, this is the season to do so. When you seek after what you believe and follow your beliefs you can experience harmony and wholeness in your life. Where there's wholeness there's peace. Where there's peace there's love. Where there's love there's joy. Where there's joy there's a rich life and happy living.

God Bless you in the upcoming holiday season,

Chaplain (MAJ) Koeman

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[@2SBCTWarriors](https://twitter.com/2SBCTWarriors)

## Contents

True Blue.....	4
Best FiST.....	6
Warriors Serve.....	8
Warrior X-4.....	12
Keris Strike.....	14
Nakdong River.....	16
Cambodian Visit.....	18





Photo by Sgt. Daniel Johnson

1st Lt. Hardy P. Merrill, a platoon leader with C Co., 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, finishes first in the 12-mile-foot march during Expert Infantryman's Badge testing Sept. 26 here. The Expert Infantryman's Badge is awarded to Soldiers who are able to complete a 30-event challenge and 12-mile-foot march that covers the skills needed for an expert infantryman.

## Twelve Warriors Earn True Blue

Story by Sgt. Daniel Johnson  
2SBCT Public Affairs

**SCHOFIELD BARRACKS, Hawaii** – More than 900 Soldiers of 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team and 3rd Brigade Combat Team competed for the Expert Infantryman's Badge during the week of Sept. 27 here.

The Expert Infantryman's Badge is awarded to Soldiers who have mastered the requirements of being an Infantryman consisting of 30 different tasks and a 12-mile-foot march. Those who complete this

trial without a single failure or restart earn the title of True Blue.

"A total of 935 started this quest and 158 finished and were awarded the coveted Expert Infantryman's Badge. Of those, only 12 earned True Blue," said Command Sgt. Maj. Benjamin Jones, Command Sergeant Major of the 25th Infantry Division.

True Blue is the 1%, the elite of the Infantry. They have shown that they are truly proficient experts in their field. Soldiers such as Spc. Paulo

David, an infantryman with 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, have proven themselves to be the best there is.

"The EIB sets us apart. There are not a lot of junior enlisted who have earned the EIB," said David. "It makes us look more professional in our career field."

"It sets a Soldier up as a leader," said 1st Sgt. Derrick C. Garner, First Sergeant for HHC, 2nd SBCT. "That's what a young Soldier needs to see, leaders that have been there



and done that so they can push those personal experiences down to the younger Soldiers.”

The EIB is more than just another award. While Soldiers in other military occupations can compete and earn the EIB, only Infantry Soldiers may wear the award.

“The 12-mile march is no joke, but the knowledge of all of the lanes is the difficult part to master,” said David. “There are 30 events over

three days that must be completed to succeed.”

“Everyone can go out for the EIB but only a select few will actually earn it,” said Garner. “It sets the tone for young Soldiers. If they can complete this, the sky is the limit.”

The EIB isn’t just an award for the Soldier, or something to add to their record. It is an integral part of the Infantry life and shows they are prepared to lead Soldiers into

combat with the skills they have learned.

“The Expert Infantryman’s Badge is more than just a piece of iron that sits upon your chest,” said Jones, “It is a symbol of excellence and a testament of a true infantryman.”



**Photo by Sgt. Daniel Johnson**

Command Sgt. Maj. Benjamin Jones, Command Sergeant Major of the 25th Infantry Division, awards the Expert Infantryman’s Badge to Spc. Paulo David, an infantryman with 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, along with an Army Commendation Medal for being “True Blue” by completing all events on the first attempt, as part of the award ceremony held Sept. 27 here. The Expert Infantryman’s Badge is awarded to Soldiers who are able to complete a 30 event challenge and 12-mile-foot march that covers the skills needed for an expert infantryman.

# Best FiST generates team-building effects

Story by Capt. Eric Swanson  
2SBCT Fires and Effect Coordination Cell

**SCHOFIELD BARRACKS, Hawaii** – Artillerymen from across 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team went toe-to-toe in a grueling 48-hour fire support competition Sept. 1 on the island of Hawaii to determine which Fire Support Team would take home the title.

The brigade Best Fire Support Team Competition is held annually to test each team's ability to call for fire, locate targets and navigate with a map and compass. This test not only verifies the training and knowledge of fire supporters across the brigade, but it provides each team the opportunity to measure itself against the other teams.

This year, at Pōhakuloa Training Area, C Troop, 2nd Battalion, 14th

Cavalry Regiment's FiST made up of 2nd Lt. Michael Gillcrist, Staff Sgt. Kyle Smith, and Spc. Kristopher Gonzalez were crowned 2nd SBCT's Best FiST.

"We have a good, solid team, led by a terrific fire support sergeant and great, hard working junior enlisted. The team always takes pride in what they do, and they continuously excel," said Gillcrist.

Forward observers, a term used synonymously with fire supporters, observe mortar, cannon, and rocket fires to integrate effects with their maneuver brothers and sisters. They can also synchronize attack helicopter and close air support, or fixed wing fires, to achieve joint effects in support of operations. Combining all of these elements effectively is a difficult task that requires advanced training.

The results of the competition allow commanders and fire support officers to tailor their training plans and ensure all forward observers across the brigade are maintaining basic fire support skills. Both physically and mentally challenging, the Best FiST competition provided the opportunity for company FSOs and NCOs to measure the determination and capabilities of their Soldiers.

When asked what his team did to prepare for the competition, Gillcrist said, "We were dedicated to work hard every day at PT to ensure we would be as fit as possible. We focused our train-up on our weaknesses so we were well rounded for every event." The C Troop, 2-14 CAV team expects to maintain that distinction during next year's competition.



Photo by 1st Lt. Daniel North

The Fire Support Team from Troop C, 2nd Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, won the brigade's Best FiST Competition conducted at the Pōhakuloa Training Area on the Island of Hawai'i Sept. 1-2. 2nd Lt. Michael Gillcrist, Fire Support Officer; Staff Sgt. Kyle Smith, Fire Support NCO; and Spec. Kristopher Gonzalez, Fire Support Specialist, are the members of the winning team.





**Photo by 2nd Lt. Shea Orr**

Section chief Staff Sgt. Andrew Hudman inspects a round and propellant prior to firing during Bravo Battery, 2nd Battalion, 11th Field Artillery Regiment's table XII certification and qualification. 2nd Battalion, 11th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team and elements from the brigade deployed to Pōhakuloa Training Area on the island of Hawai'i from Aug. 17 to Sept. 22 to conduct collective training and qualify platoons for future Contingency Response Force missions.

When not competing for the title of Best FiST, forward observers had to certify on indirect fire systems.

In order to certify, forward observers must accurately call for fire on a target, recognize enemy weapon systems, and demonstrate their knowledge of ammunition to gauge how to generate the best effects on a target. The testing leaves very little room for error, ensuring each fire support team is the best at what they do.

Throughout the exercise, forward observers participated in key training events that tested their knowledge of equipment and ability to integrate fires from multiple sources.

The training also offered the opportunity to practice integrating a multitude of assets from across the 25th Infantry Division. All 2nd SBCT FSTs participated in a defensive live fire scenario where forward observers honed their skills while controlling attack aviation, mortar and artillery fires simultaneously.

As a result of this training, the brigade's fire supporters gained valuable experience in planning and controlling joint fires. An added result of the training was the team building aspect as observers, fire direction officers and Howitzer crews learned to work together and strengthen relationships within the fires community.



# Warriors serve the Big Island community

Story by Story by 1st. Lt. Mike Weiner  
B-52 Executive Officer

**Pohakuloa Training Area, Hawaii** – Soldiers from Company B, 52nd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, took a break from a rigorous training cycle at Pohakuloa Training Area to volunteer with Habitat for Humanity on the Big Island of Hawaii, Sept. 2.

The project was part of Habitat for Humanity's Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative, providing assistance to different neighborhoods throughout the Big Island and bringing much needed care and attention to their homes.

The event was planned and coordinated with the help of PTA range operations and Margo Takata, the local Habitat for Humanity event coordinator. During a break from M4 marksmanship, M320

qualification and a TOW live-fire exercise, 34 Soldiers traveled to the town of Waimea, Hawaii to give back to the local community.

Sayer Houseal, Habitat for Humanity project coordinator, organized the Soldiers into smaller groups, briefed them on safety concerns and provided a tour of the site. Each group of Soldiers then carved an area and got to work. The jobs the Soldiers had to work on included exterior trim painting, interior painting, demolition, area beautification and re-organization of the house, front and back yards.

At the outset of the project, Houseal believed the project would not be complete until late in the afternoon but by 10:30 a.m., two dumpsters were filled to almost overflowing. The tasks Houseal expected would take all day to complete, took B-52

IN Soldiers only a matter of hours.

Soldiers were then treated to lunch at the home of a local resident, known to the Soldiers only as "Aunt Malia." "Aunt Malia" prepared a buffet style Hawaiian meal and invited several members of the local community to join her in thanking B-52 IN for their support.

After lunch, the Soldiers moved on to their second project of the day, an overgrown yard in Waimea. The Soldiers set about removing six pallets of cinderblocks, an overgrown avocado tree and approximately 200 overgrown potted plants. After several hours of cutting, hauling and loading, the yard was clear of all unwanted debris but not before members of the local community stopped by to lend a hand and express their gratitude.



Photo by Sgt. Jonathan Bruce  
Pfc. Scott Levandowski, Company B, 52nd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team and Habitat for Humanity volunteer, Clyde, work together to remove debris from the yard. B-52 IN volunteered with Habitat for Humanity to give back to the community in appreciation for their support.



Houseal spoke to the Soldiers saying they had chosen a path in which they protect and ensure the freedoms of all citizens, yet despite this incredible responsibility, have taken time to show the community that Soldiers have not forgotten where they came from and what is important — supporting the communities that have supported our military so well.

Community relations coordinator Erin Stephens expressed her profound thanks and mentioned that she had never worked with a more jovial, disciplined group since she began working with Habitat over two years ago. She told the Soldiers that the lasting effect they have made on that community will not be forgotten and will be talked about for years to come.



**Photo by Sgt. Jonathan Bruce**

Sgt. Jason Seighman, Company B, 52nd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, cuts larger branches down to make them more manageable for the Soldiers and volunteers to carry away the debris. B-52 IN took a break from training at Pohakuloa Training Area to show their appreciation for the community.



**Photo by Sgt. Jonathan Bruce**

Pfc. Morris Soriano, Company B, 52nd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, helps homeowner, Henry, disassemble an old chicken coop as part of Habitat for Humanity's Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative. B-52 IN took a break from training at Pohakuloa Training Area to show their appreciation for the community.













Photo by Maj. Kari McEwen

Maj. Colin Davis, 2nd SBCT civil affairs officer and Maj. Tim Wright, 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment executive officer, haul a heavy log uphill during "The Apparatus". 1st Sgt. Michael Moore, 2nd Battalion, 11th Field Artillery Regiment, provides motivation to his teammates as he prepares to lend a hand.

## Leaders team up for Warrior X-4

Story by Maj. Kari McEwen  
2SBCT Public Affairs Officer

### SCHOFIELD BARRACKS, Hawaii

– Leaders from the 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division tested their strength and their team work during Warrior X-4 at Schofield Barracks on August 7, 2013.

Warrior X-4 was designed to evaluate majors, first sergeants, and warrant officers across the brigade on leadership skills and critical thinking, but the overall intent of the exercise was to build the team. Participants split up into four

different teams comprised of officers and non-commissioned officers who are not accustomed to working together on a day-to-day basis.

X-4 events included a leader Preventative Maintenance Checks and Services (PMCS) and a Light Medium Tactical Vehicle (LMTV) push, a stress shoot, force-on-force capture the flag, the apparatus, and a POW rescue lane.

Maj. Tim Wright, 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment executive officer, was the only member of his battalion assigned to his Warrior X-4 squad.

"It's all about working together as a team," Wright said. "And what's unique is that these aren't guys that usually work together day in and day out. There is no one here from my battalion. I'm working with leaders, majors, non-commissioned officers and chief warrant officers from across the brigade combat team."

Col. Thomas Mackey, 2nd Brigade's commander, told participants early in the day to use this opportunity to get to know one another, to use their brains, and to have fun.

Warrior X-4 participants used more than their brains during the



18-hour ordeal. Many of the stations required strength and stamina. Teams did not know what the events were before they arrived at each station, and they didn't have much time to come up with a strategy to complete the tasks.

The random selection of teams and secret nature of the tasks was intentional.

"Instead of fighting a plan, you're going to fight what's in front of you,"

Mackey said.

"We have guys from all six battalions and from the brigade headquarters working together to accomplish a task. Just going through that as a team, doing that hard job, has benefits well beyond what you can measure with something like a points scale at the end of the day," said Wright.

Warrior X-4 was preceded by Warriors X-1, X-2, and X-3, each

designed to assess leader abilities, build teams and facilitate horizontal communication across the brigade. Warrior X-5 is in the early planning stages and will likely come to fruition during the 2nd quarter of fiscal year 2014. It will be a much larger event and participants will include leaders ranging from platoon sergeants to the brigade command team.



Photo by Maj. Kari McEwen

A Warrior X-4 squad comprised of majors, first sergeants and chief warrant officers pushes a LMTV around the motorpool just before executing preventative maintenance checks and services on four HMMWVs.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Sean Everette

Soldiers from the U.S. Army Pacific, 25th Infantry Division, 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 9th Mission Support Command, and 56th Theater Intelligence Operations Group stand in formation with Malaysian Army 2nd Division soldiers during the Keris Strike 13 Opening Ceremony at Lapangan Terband Camp, Sungai Petani, Kedah, Malaysia Sept. 17. Keris Strike is a USARPAC-sponsored Theater Security Cooperation Program exercise conducted annually with the Malaysian Armed Forces designed to strengthen the military ties between the two countries.

## Keris Strike Opening Ceremony

Story by Staff Sgt. Sean Everette  
2SBCT Public Affairs

**LAPANGAN TERBAND CAMP, Malaysia** – Members of the U.S. and Malaysian armies gathered together to begin Exercise Keris Strike 13 with a ceremony at Lapangan Terband Camp, Sungai Petani, Kedah, Malaysia the morning of Sept. 17.

Maj. Gen. Dato Mohd Shukuri bin Ahmad, the General Officer Commanding of the Malaysian Army 2nd Infantry Division, hosted Brig. Gen. Pete Johnson, the 25th Infantry Division Deputy Commanding General – Operations, and Col. Thomas Mackey, the 2nd

Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division Commander and U.S. deputy co-director the exercise, as part of the ceremony.

Keris Strike is a U.S. Army Pacific-sponsored Theater Security Cooperation Program exercise conducted annually with the Malaysian Armed Forces. This year marks the 17th time the two countries have partnered for this exercise. The main purpose of Keris Strike is to strengthen the military-to-military ties between the U.S. and Malaysian Armed Forces while conducting Peace Support Operations and Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief, as well

as Medical First Responder and Counter-IED training.

“This exercise is the manifestation and expression of our intimate military ties and cooperation,” said Shukuri during his opening remarks. “It is also an avenue to further strengthen the existing relationship between the troops from the United States Army and the Malaysian Army Field Command that we have enjoyed over these years.”

This year is the first time in more than ten years that U.S. active duty Soldiers have had a major role in Keris Strike. Because of the end



of Operations Iraqi Freedom and New Dawn and the drawing down of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, U.S. forces in the Pacific are able to refocus and bring an active duty perspective to the event.

“It is very important for our Army to understand the Pacific area, in particular the very strategic area that Malaysia sits in,” said Johnson. “So we come here

with open thoughts about learning what we can about the setting, the populations, the people, the culture, the history, and understand, that should we be called to come together with the Malaysian army, we could operate together very effectively.”

The 25th Infantry Division and its 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team are taking the lead for the U.S. forces, and are being supported by the 9th Mission Support Command,

Pacific Army Reserve and the 56th Theater Intelligence Operations Group of the Washington Army National Guard. The Malaysian Army 2nd Infantry Division is hosting the exercise.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Sean Everett

Part of the joint combined staff of the U.S. and Malaysian militaries works at the Tactical Operations Center during the Command Post Exercise of Keris Strike 13 Sept. 25 at Lapangan Terbang Camp, Sungai Petani, Kedah, Malaysia. Keris Strike is a U.S. Army Pacific-sponsored Theater Security Cooperation Program exercise conducted annually with the Malaysian Armed Forces designed to strengthen the military ties between the two countries.



Photo by Maj. Jung hoon Park, Republic of Korea Army, Military History Institute, ROKA HQs  
Lt. Col. James Tuite (second from left) and Lt. Col. Charles Bergman (far right), battalion commanders in 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, pose with members of the Republic of Korea Army and U.S. military delegation following the dinner hosted by Lt. Gen. Kook Sun Lim, the Deputy Commander of the 2nd Operational Command, Republic of Korea Army. Lt. Col. Tuite and Lt. Col. Bergman travelled to Korea to celebrate the Nakdong River victory, the first major victory for South Korean and U.S. forces in the Korea War

## Warriors celebrate Nakdong River victory

Story by Lt. Col. James Tuite  
1-21 Battalion Commander

**SCHOFIELD BARRACKS, Hawaii**  
– “A nation that forgets its history, has no future,” said Lt. Gen. Kook Sun Lim, the Deputy Commander of the 2nd Operational Command, Republic of Korea Army at a dinner to welcome a U.S. military delegation at the start of a victory celebration of the first major victory for South Korean and U.S. forces in the Korea War.

The Nakdong River battle, which occurred two months into the Korean War, marked the first turning point in the war that started the United Nations Forces’ drive north on the peninsula. In the 63 years since the September 1950 Nakdong River victory, the gratitude of the Korean government towards all UN Forces that assisted its nation

continues to grow.

The 25th Infantry Division was one of the units that fought at the Nakdong River. The ROK Army requested 25th ID representatives to participate in the military delegation which also included service members from 2nd Infantry Division, 1st Marine Division and the 5th Air Force. 25th ID sent representatives from the 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team units which fought at Nakdong, Lt. Col. Charles Bergman, 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment commander, and Lt. Col. James Tuite, 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment commander.

“This has been a uniquely incredible experience that has not only increased my understanding of the Korean War, but has vastly grown my appreciation and respect for the Republic of Korea and all Korean

War veterans,” said Bergman after the Nakdong battle reenactment.

The Sept. 13 reenactment, the premier event of the scheduled visit, was staged at the actual battle site along the Nakdong River. It included more than 500 multinational Soldiers, 10 howitzers, 20 river boats, vast amounts of pyrotechnics, hundreds of props, 4 mega screens that displayed the live action and a brigade’s worth of fixed wing and rotary wing aviation. It was at this battle where General Walton “Jonnie” Walker issued his famous “Stand or Die” order to the 8th Army as this was the last foothold for friendly forces on the Korean peninsula.

During the reenactment, both the ROK Chief of Staff and the current 8th Army Commander, Lt. Gen. Bernard Champoux, delivered



comments to the audience on the significance of the battle and the continued brotherhood shared by the Republic of Korea and the United States.

General Jung-Hwan Cho stated, "In just 60 years, we've risen from the ashes of the Nakdong and have gone from a receiver nation to donor nation . . . thanks to the sacrifices of our UN allies we are the country we are today."

Champoux echoed this sentiment in his comments and reinforced the strong brotherhood the two armies

share by repeating the old battle cry from the fierce fighting on the Nakdong, "We Go Together!"

Nearly 8,000 Korean citizens, students, veterans and military officials were in attendance to observe the 2-hour long event.

"Never have I been treated so well and shown this much respect for what we did during the Korean War," said Mr. Jesus Rodriguez with tears in his eyes. Rodriguez, who served with the 29th Infantry Regiment at Nakdong and later with the 35th Infantry Regiment under the 25th

Division proudly wore his 25th ID patch.

A quote is inscribed on a prominent wall at the Korean National War Museum in Seoul and reads "Our Nation honors her sons and daughters who answered the call to defend a country they never knew and the people they never met." To the two battalion commanders and everyone else who participated in the visit it was overwhelmingly clear that the people and government of Korea honor them as well.



Photo by Maj. Jung hoon Park, Republic of Korea Army, Military History Institute, ROKA HQs

Lt. Col. James Tuite (right) and Lt. Col. Charles Bergman (second from right), stand with Lt. Gen. Bernard Champoux, 8th Army commander (third from left) and other members of the U.S. military delegation during a remembrance ceremony at the 303 Hill Monument near Camp Carroll in Waegwan, South Korea. Hill 303 was the site of a major Korean War battle where the U.S. 1st Cavalry Division defended Waegwan. The remembrance ceremony paid tribute to those U.S. Soldiers who gave their lives defending freedom on the peninsula.





Photo by Sgt. Daniel Johnson

Sgt. 1st Class Dennis Kirk, a platoon sergeant with the Lightning Academy, gives a Royal Cambodian Military delegation a tour of the Pre-Ranger facilities used during training at the academy here on Sept. 18. The Lightning Academy is positioned to be the premier training hub of the Pacific for all branches of the military and our Pacific partnered nations.

## Cambodian Armed Forces Visits 2SBCT

Story by Sgt. Daniel Johnson  
2SBCT Public Affairs

**SCHOFIELD BARRACKS, Hawaii** – Soldiers and officers from the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces visited the 25th Infantry Division and 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team the week of Sept. 20 to learn more about the Non-commissioned Officer Corps and training opportunities available with the 25th ID.

The 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment hosted the delegation during their visit, staying along side U.S. Soldiers in the barracks and sharing meals in the Warrior Inn Dining Facility. The delegation

was given tours and training on everything from the motor pool to the expert infantryman's badge and Modern Army Combatives.

One of the key visits was to the division's Lightning Academy. The Academy offers combined training programs for Soldiers of foreign militaries to help strengthen the defense capabilities with our regionally aligned partners in the Pacific.

"These tours are very important as it gives leadership a chance to understand what the Lightning Academy can offer to them as the academy positions itself as the

premier training hub of the Pacific," said Lt. Ken Woods, an officer in charge at the Lightning Academy.

"The combined training available here at the academy is important to our strategic partnerships because it not only strengthens our relationships but helps ensure our allies can take this training back and better prepare their Soldiers for future contingency missions in the Pacific," said Sgt. 1st Class Dennis Kirk, a platoon sergeant with the Lightning Academy.

"Our primary role is to train our Soldiers and develop tactical leadership skills but our secondary



role is to strengthen the bonds we have with our Pacific partners,” said Woods.

It isn’t just the Soldiers from partnered nations that benefit when they train at the academy; they bring a lot to the training for our Soldiers as well.

“There is a definite exchange of information,” said Woods. “The training we conduct is very symbiotic, we learn a lot of different things from allied Soldiers when they come to train with us, not only tactics and techniques but also cultural lessons.”

“There is training going on here everyday, and that allows for a lot of opportunities for our regionally aligned partners to come here and train with us,” said Kirk. “That allows us to learn about each others

cultures and develop relationships that will aid us in future contingency missions across the Pacific.”

One of the primary goals when training foreign nations is to show the capabilities of the backbone of the Army, the Non-commissioned Officers Corps.

“The first thing the delegation took a look at was the terrain model being used by a pre-ranger class,” said Kirk. “Showing them how the NCO corps, specifically a squad leader, takes on the responsibility of planning and executing missions or patrols.”

“Some of our partners have relatively new, or no NCO corps,” Kirk continues. “We try to show off the strengths of a strong NCO corps when we can. One of the biggest strengths of the corps

is adaptability; we can plan and execute patrol missions without direct officer supervision and makes for an extremely agile force.”

The Academy is available to all military units on the island of Oahu, and abroad. Joint and combined training is encouraged in their strong course offerings, consisting of pre-ranger training, lightning leaders course, combatives training, adaptive leaders course, tactical weapons course and air assault course.

As the academy positions itself as the training hub of the Pacific, it will continue to expand and increase the scope of training available to U.S. and partnered militaries with jungle warfare and counter IED courses already scheduled to be implemented.



**Photo by Sgt. Daniel Johnson**

Sgt. 1st Class Dennis Kirk, a platoon sergeant with the Lightning Academy, gives a Royal Cambodian Military delegation a tour of the facilities used during training at the academy here on Sept. 18. The Lightning Academy is positioned to be the premier training hub of the Pacific for all branches of the military and our Pacific partnered nations.



